

Editor's Note

Leaving the Banquet

The offerings in this, my last issue as Editor of *Addiction Science & Clinical Practice*, reinforce my feeling of stepping away from a banquet that has many rich courses still to come. In this final issue produced by NIDA:

- Drs. Manoranjan D'Souza and Athina Markou review what researchers have discovered about how nicotine affects brain function to produce dependence, and examine the prospects for medications based on each of the instrumental interactions;
- Dr. Sonia Minnes and colleagues examine the damage that use of tobacco and other drugs by pregnant women inflicts upon their children. Longitudinal studies, now maturing along with their participant cohorts, are starting to reconcile earlier findings and trace the effects of prenatal drug exposure throughout childhood and adolescence;
- Dr. Sheppard Kellam and coauthors ponder the lessons learned from a longitudinal study in which addressing first- and second-graders' aggressive and disruptive behaviors curbed smoking, illicit drug abuse, and violence when they became young adults. These researchers envision a unified system for human development research and practice with universal interventions as the front line of a multitiered system of prevention and treatment;
- Dr. Matthew O. Howard and colleagues summarize the current state of understanding of inhalant abuse—its epidemiology, pharmacology, and consequences. Although most inhalant abusers soon quit, and the problem is infrequently seen in treatment centers, the review makes a strong case that more research on this early-onset, highly dangerous behavior is critically needed;
- Dr. Alexandra E. Shields explores the ethical risks that genetically based research and treatments will bring along with their potential benefits, particularly when they address highly stigmatized diseases such as addiction. This article highlights the need for distributive justice—making sure that genetic advances lessen rather than exacerbate existing health disparities;
- Dr. Alexandre B. Laudet advocates assessing patients' quality of life as a measure of progress and success in substance abuse treatment. She argues that clinicians' goals for their patients should, and usually already do, exceed simple abstinence, and that defining and standardizing criteria for quality of life will facilitate research and full recovery.

As I retire from the editorship of the journal, I have many thanks to bestow. Board members lent their prestige, critiqued issues, suggested topics, and steered us to authors and panelists. Peer reviewers provided invaluable guidance. Authors, many accustomed to writing mainly for peers in their own specialty areas, fashioned state-of-the-art reviews to be grasped and used by a much wider group of colleagues. Panelists brought their experience to bear on the article contents and debated meanings and implications. Readers—I hope—found much to stimulate their thinking and much to use.

Although I will continue to keep abreast of developments in the field as Editor of *NIDA Notes*, I will miss the special engagement with people and issues that editing the journal has made possible. I will continue to follow *AS&CP* in its new home, and I wish the new Editors an experience as fine as I have had.



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